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PRIORITIZING RESOURCES AND ORGANIZATION FOR INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ACT OF 2008

SPEECH OF

HON. MARSHA BLACKBURN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Saturday, September 27, 2008

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support for S. 3325, the Prioritizing Resources and Organization for Intellectual Property Act of 2008. This critical legislation will not only provide more resources for law enforcement to enforce existing copyright laws, it will also promote better coordination of U.S. intellectual property policy in the executive branch.

These are two important policy goals for my constituents in Tennessee's 7th District. Tennessee's economic engine is built upon the strength of the creative community's intellectual property, and industries from auto manufacturing, film and entertainment, recording arts, and live performance depend ont he Federal government enforcing their property rights.

The music industry in Nashville and Memphis alone accounts for nearly $7 billion in economic impact per year, and create than 20,000 jobs. Film, television, and cable broadcasting account for bills more. In 2004, for example, the Oscar-winning film Walk the Line shot for over 45 days in Memphis and Nashville, generating between $18 and $20 million in economic impact for the local economy, and hundreds of high paying jobs. And before Nissan moved its North American headquarters to the Nashville area, Tennessee was already home to nearly 1000 auto-related manufacturers, 159,000 jobs, and a payroll of over $6.6 billion.

These industries are based on the development, nourishment, and incubation of intellectual ideas before they evolve into marketable products. This process is not free, and instead dependent on an implicit understanding that appropriate compensation will result from investment and hard work.

Unfortunately, these industries are suffering from rampant theft of their intellectual property online, and in marketplaces around the world to the tune of $58 billion each year. The Institute for Policy Innovation estimates intellectual property theft and copyright infringement costs American workers 373,375 jobs per year, $16.3 billion in earnings, and $2.6 billion in tax revenue for governments at every level.

These statistics are alarming and unacceptable, but demonstrate the U.S. must continue a vigilant effort to increase enforcement efforts. S. 3325 would provide the Federal government with new tools and information sharing capabilities consistent with this important goal, and I urge all my colleagues to support it.

CONSOLIDATED SECURITY, DISASTER ASSISTANCE AND CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2009

SPEECH OF

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 24, 2008

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, this bill will provide the necessary funding to keep federal agencies up and running through March 6, 2009. While most agencies will continue to be funding at fiscal year 2008 levels there are three agencies, the Department of Defense, Military Construction-Veterans Affairs, and the Department of Homeland Security, that will receive full-year funding at fiscal year 2009 levels.

This massive funding bill is necessary in part because Congress lacked the will to consider fiscal year 2009 funding through the regular legislative process. Had each of the 13 annual appropriations bills been deliberated separately there would have been an opportunity to debate and reform portions of federal spending. Debate and reformation are an important part of the process because they allow funding to be shifted to more accurately reflect the priorities and needs of the American people.

With our economy in crisis it is more important than ever to ensure a budget that creates jobs and improves job security for hardworking Americans, provides all citizens with healthcare and affords an exemplary education for our children that will give them the skills to compete in today and tomorrow's world. It is significant that the federal budget in fiscal year 2008 was not reflective of my constituents' needs and priorities.

Unemployment is continuing to rise. The latest unemployment statistics show that our national unemployment is at 6.1 percent and Ohio's unemployment is now 7 percent. At the same time the number of jobs vanishing in America outpaces the number of jobs being created. This net loss of jobs coupled with high unemployment is a disastrous combination. Home foreclosures continue to rise and more families are expected to fall behind. In Cleveland the foreclosure crisis continues to worsen substantially. 47 million Americans have no health insurance and another 50 million Americans remain underinsured.

Fiscal year 2008 appropriations bills dedicated only approximately 6 percent of the discretionary budget to education, training, employment and social serices. Roughly another 5 percent was dedicated to health, 4 percent for services and benefits for our veterans and approximately 5 percent was devoted to income security. The vast majority, over 50 percent, of the discretionary budget was spent on national defense. In addition, the Department of Defense budget has received a 6 percent increase between fiscal years 2008, and 2009 while the Departments of Education, Labor and Health and Human Services will continue to be funded at fiscal year 2008 spending levels.

The United States military is unmatched. We outspend the rest of the world combined two to one. Yet the bill follows a misguided strategy of buying weapons that provide Americans with no increased safety. This bill fails to match real threats to our security with appropriate defensive measures. Our foreign policy should promote economic stability worldwide, thereby eliminating the true roots of terrorism, desperation. This bill does the opposite by swelling policies of fear and aggression. H.R. 2638 contains a host of provisions that do a grave disservice to the American public.

This bill devotes $10 billion to missile defense. These funds include a third interceptor site for the Ground-Based Mid-Course Defense (GMD) program despite a lack of assurance that the system will work or is needed for the safety of our nation. Congress' continued funding of the GMD only lends credence to the Administration's misguided claims the system is necessary to defend the U.S. from a long-range ballistic missile attack from Iran despite the fact that Iran is unlikely to pose such a threat to the United States in the foreseeable future.

Furthermore, the bill appropriates $3.6 billion for the Army's future combat systems; $2.9 billion for the Air Force's next generation aircraft the F/A–22 Raptor and $3.6 billion for the F–35 Joint Strike Fighter which is a next generation aircraft for use by the Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps.

The security of America lies not in defense spending but in ensuring well paid jobs for hard-working Americans, guaranteed health care and a strong education for our nation's youth. We must shift our priorities because our current spending trends are threatening our social fabric and economic security.

Another detrimental provision in the bill allows the longstanding moratorium on drilling on the outer continental shelf to expire, which is a policy that will provide virtually no relief from high gas prices in the short or long term. It will instead lock us further into an unsustainable energy future and pave the way for drilling in our precious Great Lakes, our drinking water source. If we were serious about lowering prices now, we would focus on that which can actually make a difference now, which is energy efficiency and curbing the profit seeking behavior of the oil industry.

Although the budget priorities in this bill are out of touch, it does contain important provisions that are needed by the American people and by my constituents in Ohio's tenth district. These programs and others all have merit, deserve more funding and will have a positive impact during these tough economic times. Unfortunately this bill holds these admirable initiatives hostage to our nation's bloated and often counterproductive defense spending.

For example, this bill provides an increase of $23.5 million over fiscal year 2008 for the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP). In Cleveland and around the nation families are turning to food pantries for emergency food assistance. Food pantries are continuing to experience increased demand and are finding it increasingly difficult to meet the needs of the community. As jobs continue to decline and food and fuel prices continue to rise, more middle-class families are seeking this emergency food assistance.

This bill will provide an additional $1 billion over fiscal year 2008 funding levels for the Nutrition for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program to help combat the struggles families face with rising food costs. The bill grants $2.5 billion more than the fiscal year 2008 level for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program to ensure that families

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HeinOnline -- 1 Protecting America's Intellectual Property: A Legislative History of the Pro IP Act of 2008 (William H. Manz, ed.) [lxvi] 2009

DOCUMENT NO. 27

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